

JUNE 1986

No. 64



UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Black Cockatoos
by G.J. Broinowski

Newsletter

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UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC.

Incorporated in New South Wales. Registered Office: The Conservation Hut,
Valley of Waters Reserve, Valley Road, Wentworth Falls 2782.
Address for Correspondence: P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Single Pensioners and Juniors \$2.00 per year; Married Pensioners \$3.00; Single Membership \$5.00; Family Membership \$8.00. Those joining after June 30th pay half subscription to end of year.

MEETINGS: Held on last Friday in the month, January to November inclusive at the Conservation Hut, Valley of Waters Reserve, Valley Road Wentworth Falls at 7.30 p.m.

For speakers at coming meetings, please see Public notices in the Gazette.

COMMITTEE FOR 1986

President.....	Reg Toseland	84.1682
Vice-Presidents.....	Michael Dark	58.7061
	Eric Blick	88.1051
Secretary.....	David Horton-James	57.3270
Treasurer.....	Joy Anderson	57.1620 1602
Membership Officer.....	Joy Anderson	57.1620
Newsletter Editor	Ewart Collings	57.2131
Walks Convenors	Olive & John Noble	87.8342
Hut Convenor	Lois Horton-James	57.3270
Education Officer.....	Dorothy Davis	57.1258
Librarian.....	Betty Collings	57.2131
Hut Duty Organiser.....	Beverley Thompson	57.2076
Land Preservation Officer..	Winsome Gregory	57.1573

NEWSLETTER: Four issues a year - April, July, October, January
Advertising space available.

LIBRARY: A wide range of books on wildlife and conservation available to members. Facilities for borrowing and returning books at Monthly Meetings.

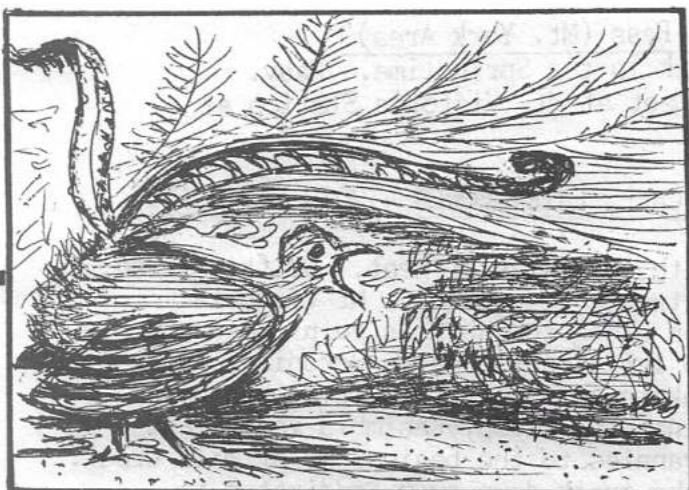
THE HUT: The Society maintains a small museum and information centre at the Conservation Hut. It is manned on weekends and holidays by voluntary helpers.

PUBLICATIONS: A range of specialist booklets, posters, maps, postcards etc may be purchased at the Hut.

SALE OF NATIVE PLANTS: Opportunities to purchase native plants grown by Members are organised from time to time during the year. These sales are held at the Hut, proceeds to the Land Preservation Fund.

WALKS: Walks are organised on the first Sunday and third Thursday of the month, conducted by experienced leaders.

LAND PRESERVATION: The Society has a Land Preservation Fund which was set up to give lovers of the bush an opportunity to preserve environmentally important land in the Blue Mountains by purchase and dedication as a reserve.



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COMING TALKS

June - Beverley Fiedler
Nature Slides

July - Wyn Jones
Wombat Management

August - Peter Smith
Bushfires and Birds at Bega

COMING WALKS

July, Sunday 6th - Horse Track - Rodriguez Pass

Walk down Horse Track to creek, up Rodriguez Pass, see rain forest and water falls. Plenty of steps to climb - medium hard walk. Meet at Evans Lookout at 9.30 a.m. Approx. 6 hours walk. The climb will be taken gently. Leader John Noble. 87-8342

July, Thursday 17th - Walls Ledge - Centennial Glen

Plenty of low bush, magnificent views over Kanimbla Valley. Easy Track rough in places. Meet at Commuter Car Park, Blackheath (over level crossing and turn right) at 10.00 a.m. Approx. 4 hours walk. Leader Clive Noble. 87-8342

August, Sunday 3rd - Bruce's Walk. Details to be announced later

August, Thursday 21st - The Duck Hole

Wildflower walk, fresh water; could boil the billy and have a barbecue if we wished. Meet at Ampol Service Station, Glenbrook at 10.00 a.m. Leader Jill Dark. 58-7061.

September, Sunday 7th - Asgaard Swamp - Abandoned Mines

Walk along fire trail, see abandoned coal mine, low scrub. Easy. Meet at Mt. Victoria station at 10.00 a.m. Leader Rachel Makinson. 87-1302.

September, Thursday 18th - Berghoffers Pass (Mt. York Area)

A touch of history and a delightful walk in the Springtime. Easy.
Fantastic views over Hartley Valley. Meet at Mt. Victoria Station at
10.00 a.m. Leader Eric Blick. 88-1051

REPORT ON WALK - BORONIA POINT, COX'S CAVE, FAIRY BOWER - 20TH MARCH 1986

The morning was clear and colourful with a promise of heat. Swifts sliced the air with their sickle wings while twenty of us met at Mt Victoria station. We set off from Mt Piddington along the Horne's Point Road and took a somewhat concealed track on the left that leads to Boronia Point. The heath at first is dominated by *Banksia ericifolia*, their spikes not yet aflame. From the point we looked into the sleepy Kanimbla Valley and across at the time-eroded rocks and crannies to the beginnings of Mill Creek. We had to re-trace our steps to take the track down from Piddington to Cox's Cave.

A Golden Whistler welcomed us with his song, but alas no lyrebirds which at times frequent the area. We were lucky to have identified for us a not so common *Banksia paludosa* as well as many other plants. We passed by a mini forest of young Blue Mt ash, their place, thin trunks stretching and competing for the sun, on through a tunnel of black wattle, down and around rocks and water courses to where the gulley opens with a cathedral-like effect below Cox's Cave. The vertical ladder, the rock overhang, the sand-slippery half buried steps up to the cave deterred no one. We all stood below the high double domed cave fascinated, but the vibrations of wonder from our geologist could almost be heard. He was baffled as to how it was formed. Since then he has been working on a theory which he will share with us some day.

We lunched in the cool, watery shade of Fairy Bower before climbing another track back to the top. The walk was a first for several but I'm sure they will be back for more in the area.

WALK - ROBERT'S PASS LADDER, INSPIRATION POINT, LILLIAN'S BRIDGE -
THURSDAY 17TH APRIL 1986

We started with 21 friends, but the rain beat us, and the finishing party was down to 9,

From Leura Golf Club, we walked to the Resort Site, and along the public access track to Inspiration Point in fine weather. Our trip to the ladder at Robert's Pass was slightly overgrown with ferns, but the actual access ladder was greatly admired and very much appreciated by all who ventured on to it. For this grand piece of voluntary work, we sincerely thank Bruce Forbes and Jim Smith; plus their friends who assisted, and for those who were at the 'opening', when David Lawton cut the ribbon.

On our return to Inspiration Point for lunch - we did get wet... and those who arrived last had no chance to shelter - all the under-ledges were full!! This is where some of us parted, but the rest took a chance, and we made it to Lilian's Bridge in fine weather - rewarded by viewing lots of Flame Robins across the Golf Course.

We even made our return in dry weather, and were almost back to civilization and the tarred roads, when the heavens opened. Enough said. Thank you to those who gave donations towards the cost of the ladder. See you next time.

REPORT ON VERA FALLS WALK - 6TH APRIL 1986

A small but manageable group of ten set off from the Hut for the Sunday bushwalk in April, to Vera Falls. We were well prepared for leeches, having sprayed our feet and ankles with aerogard and I had a large container of salt. However they must have been so well fed after the February walk that I only sighted one as we crossed the creek well down in the valley. At a couple of points we lost the track where it had been washed away, but we soon managed to pick it up again. It took us two hours to reach Vera Falls where we had lunch. We had to speak loudly against the noise of the Falls. After lunch we walked on to the junction with Jamieson Creek. It was sad to see that campers in this spot had left so much rubbish, and the area was also heavily infested with weed. The slower members of the party left earlier. It took us again two hours to go back up and for slower walkers probably two and three quarter hours. Practically no bird life was seen, except for a few Thornbills, and the only plants in bloom were in the dry sclerophyll area, where there were some Leptospermums unseasonally flowering, probably because of the mild autumn weather.



A LYRE BIRD CONFRONTATION

On a recent trip to the Snowy Mountains, rounding a corner on the very steep road above Tumut 2 Power Station, I disturbed a confrontation between two male lyre birds.

They faced each other about a metre apart, their long tails bolt upright - an arresting sight. Their tails were not expanded and spread over their heads as in the courtship display, but narrow, closed and straight upright, the magnificent lyre-shaped outside feathers outlining striking replicas of that instrument.

As June is the beginning of the lyre bird's breeding season, I assume this was a male territorial challenge, leading up to physical combat if one bird did not give way.

Male lyre birds take up territories in which they build dancing mounds to which they attract females for mating with their song and dance act. Like male bower birds they take no part in nest building or rearing the chicks.

From now on, if you creep very, very cautiously through the bush towards a singing male lyre bird, you might be fortunate enough to witness his remarkable courtship dance. Spreading his tail feathers over his head, exposing their white undersides, he jumps up and down, making them shimmer like a cascading fountain. But be very cautious - he's extremely alert.

Graham Alcorn

DO BIRDS SHARE BREEDING AREAS?

In the Autumn it is common to see foraging mixed flocks of small birds. They have left their nesting territories and apparently gain some mutual benefit from foraging together.

But last Spring I formed the opinion that there are areas that they like to share for breeding, also. Down the road from my place at Medlow Bath is a flat, sedgy area of fairly open dry eucalypt forest. The predominate undergrowth is teatree.

Though not more than a hectare, eight species nested here, in a rough semi-circle around the swampy flat. I paced out the distances between the nests, as follows: Red Browed Finch to Grey Fantail, 29 paces; Grey Fantail to Brown Thornbill, 28 paces; Brown Thornbill to Flame Robin, 35 paces; Flame Robin to Varied Sitella, 17 paces; Varied Sitella to Variegated Wren, 20 paces (this at an angle into the swamp); Sitella to Yellow Faced honey Eater, 24 paces; Yellow Faced honey Eater to Grey Thrush, 18 paces.

Interesting, isn't it? Only one of the nests was molested by predators. The young of the Grey Fantail were taken. This is a very high success rate. In my past nest recordings, it is usually about 50% for small birds.

The Grey Thrush is a threat, and I suspect the predator of the Fantails. But all the other young birds had either left the nests or were well advanced by the time the young thrushes hatched.

This area adjoins a thickly timbered gully where a number of other species breed, but along the ridges you can go a long way in either direction without finding nests.

Graham Alcorn

MAY HOLIDAYS COLOUR-IN

There was an enthusiastic response to the Education Committee's second art competition during the May school holidays.

This was colouring in two line drawings of birds, animals, etc, which might have been 'seen in the bush today'. Great originality was shown in the choice of colours used not strictly as in nature, but we were pleased that reference was made from time to time to the posters on the walls showing the native flora and fauna.

The children loved it and parents thought it was a good refuge when the weather was wet.

The winners in the May Holiday 1986 Art Competition were -

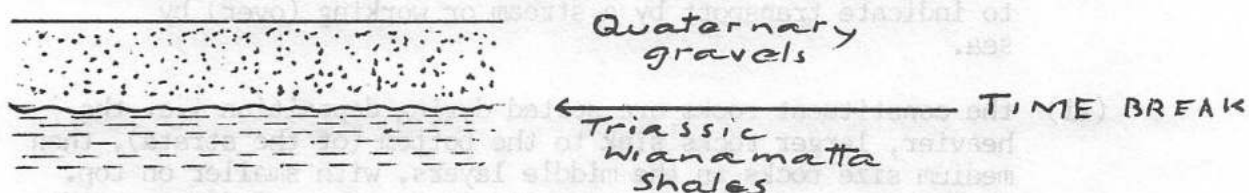
Sub-Junior	Brent Della Vale	-	Wentworth Falls Primary School
Junior	Catherine Farwood	-	Sylvania Heights Infants School
Intermediate	Kamilla Elliot	-	Wentworth Falls Primary School

UNCONFORMITY AT KANANGRA

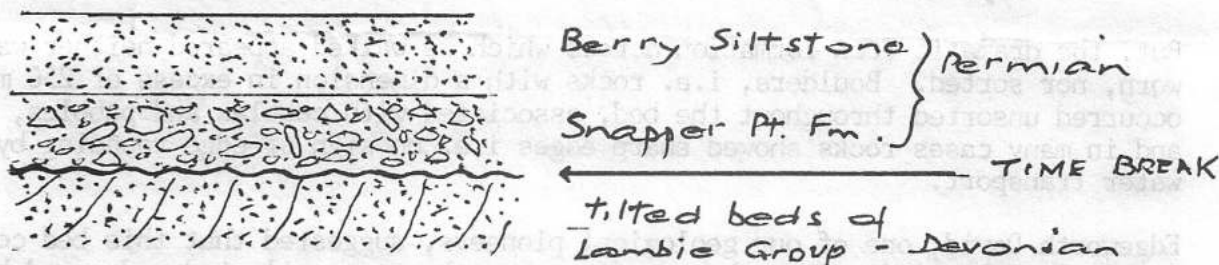
In mid April I went to Kanangra Walls with a group of friends hoping to see Halley's Comet through a clear atmosphere - I have recorded that excursion in another journal under the heading "The View from Kanangra shouldn't be mist".

We had camped at Boyd Crossing and next morning let us view the landscape from under light cloud cover. We drove to the end of the road and walked along a track through preservational works of the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Kanangra is justly famous for its glorious panoramic views but is also of geological interest for the striking angular unconformity which is part of the Walls. In sketches hereunder I have endeavoured to explain the term unconformity.



Parallel Unconformity such as could occur on Cumberland Plain



Angular Unconformity at Kanangra Walls

An unconformity occurs where sediments are deposited on another rock surface after a time gap.

An angular unconformity occurs as at Kanangra where the underlying beds dip at a different angle to the younger upper beds.

Kanangra Walls is at one of the extremities of the Sydney Basin in which most of us live. The Snapper Point Formation (formerly known in our area as Megalong Conglomerate) is exposed at a height of about 1000 metres as the foot track descends to Murdering Gully. The same formation is exposed at about 700 metres near Tallong and at sea level at Snapper Point near Durras at the southern extremity of the Basin.

Lambie Group rocks occur as basement rocks of the Sydney Basin. They are generally of quartzite i.e. sandstone hardened by geological processes. They occur at some 1200 metres at Mt. Lambie, at about 900 metres at Kanangra and also low in the Jamison Valley between the Hut and Korrowal. The rocks have been extensively weathered and have subsided to receive Sydney Basin sediments.

Of the boundaries shown in the lower sketch, as deposition of Berry Siltstone followed that of Snapper Point Formation without a time break this is a comfortable boundary. The Snapper Point Formation - Lambie Group boundary has an evident time lapse and is an unconformity, evident because, as the sketch indicates, the Lambian beds, after being laid down in horizontal or near horizontal form, have been tilted and the upturned edges weathered off to form a new surface before the Snapper Point Formation deposition commenced. The time gap could have been from the end of Lambian deposition to the commencement of Snapper Point deposition, say something in excess of one hundred million years.

The foot track across the Snapper Point Formation also provides geological interest. At first sight the formation could be taken for a conglomerate but a conglomerate infers deposition by water and usually involves two items.

- (i) the constituent rocks are rounded or at least sub-rounded to indicate transport by a stream or working (over) by sea.
- (ii) the constituent rocks are sorted during deposition i.e. the heavier, larger rocks sink to the bottom (of the strata), then medium size rocks in the middle layers, with smaller on top. These various grades of rocks lie in a matrix of finer grains, say sand.

But, the dramatic rock formation across which we walked appeared neither water worn, nor sorted. Boulders, i.e. rocks with a dimension in excess of 256 m.m. occurred unsorted throughout the bed, associated with cobbles and pebbles, and in many cases rocks showed sharp edges i.e. no sign of edge rounding by water transport.

Edgeworth David, one of our geological pioneers, suggested that this bed could be of glacial origin, i.e. the constituent rocks were collected and moved by a glacier and when the glacier melted, dropped without sorting to make such a bed as we traversed. This could have been called a boulder bed.

Some later geologists regard the bed as being a sedimentary megabreccia within the Snapper point Formation caused by Permian seas having eroded high resistant headlands which produced large quantities of angular, unsorted debris.

R.T.C.

BARGAINS, FOLK SINGERS, DENIS KEVANS, SOUP AND BREAD ROLLS

Here's a chance to re-cycle your old friends for Conservation. Maybe its a friendly chair or table, book or wheelbarrow or a cherished pot of jam or cake that you would like to see have a new home. Bring your donations to the Hut on Friday 25th July (meeting night) or Saturday 26th July when we will have a sale of all these goodies to raise funds for the Land Preservation Fund.

To ease the pain of parting with your friends or money, we'll have soup, Bread Rolls and Folk Singers on Saturday. Start saving now and watch the local press for further details.



VARIATIONS ON A THEME

As your Society continues to grace me with the title of "Patron" and send me copies of your excellent little journal, I have felt it essential to make a contribution from time to time, without being just a name (and a not so pretty face).

I was particularly motivated by recently calling at the 'Hut', unfortunately on a day when it was unmanned (or unpersoned?). The occasion is unlikely to be repeated often, as I am not given these days to long jaunts away from the Central Coast. The visit was valuable however, as it reminded me of the day of the opening of the Hut by the then Minister for Conservation, to which I was invited. I was at that time, Chief Guardian of Fauna for the State of New South Wales, and most appreciative of the initiative of the Katoomba and District Wildlife Conservation Society (I hope my memory serves me well), in undertaking "conservation education".... in other words, trapping all those happy-go-lucky tourists who ventured along the walking tracks around the Valley of the Waters ... tracks incidentally, that my father used to carry me on his shoulders, more than sixty five years ago.

The trouble with education of course, is that it is slow and problematical ... it may change the world in the end, or it may produce half converted disciples, who practice conservations on Sundays and tear the hell out of the environment for the rest of the week. Often the Under Secretary of the Chief Secretary's Department (a Department now well departed) would say to me as head of the Wildlife Service "if we could use the propaganda procedures of the famous Goebbels, maybe we would see great changes in our time". "In our time" is the critical phrase. We all need great encouragement if we are to go on and on with our efforts against what amounts to in the ultimate, the selfish and shortsighted avarice of our own countrymen, let alone others who might have their eyes on the resources of a land still with much that remains pristine, or nearly so. We all need to see some results from our efforts, since unlike the developer and investor, the achievements of the conservationist rests with management of the resources rather than with their exploitation.

It is fifty years since I first began to devise ways and means of spelling out the thinking of a conservationist. During that time I have seen some shattering changes in the environment, but at the same time, some splendid achievements. This is not the place and time to list each, and of course, I cannot be sure that the achievements will be self perpetuating. Humans are responsible for determining what will happen in the future ... or at least until some unknown force destroys the processes "that makes our world go round". Personally, I believe that we are responsible for what happens to this "living place and living space", irrespective of who causes good or evil. Too many of us will not face the job of persistence on behalf of the life-style of balanced resource use ... resource use on a sustained yield basis; nor face up to what this demands in population pressures, curbs on luxuries, structuring of society into the "have" and the "have-nots".

What is needed most is a change in human behaviour. We need a primitive understanding of association with the earth and living things. Through the centuries we have been taught by education of a formal nature, and by precept

from our mother's lap, that it is our function to control the earth and the "fowl of air". That talk has been music to our ears ... it has been what we wanted to hear. Conservation serves to deny that supremacy and all good conservationists must face that devastating fact. If we learn to believe that life is a battle with the natural systems, we will be one sort of person ... if we learn to co-ordinate with nature, we must be another person, indeed.

Environmental educators, I have concluded, must be evangelists. The great difference with the usual evangelists for the establishment, is that environmental educators cannot promise a better world to come ... they believe if this world is wrecked, then our children's children will inherit a living hell.

ALLEN A. STROM

FRIENDS OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS - A Branch of ATCV

"Feeling Weedy?" - the catch-cry of the Hut Weeders (that gallant brigade of members who aim to keep the area surrounding the Hut free of weeds) has now been taken up anew!

The 'Friends' is a community-based bush regeneration group which aims to work in areas of degraded bush (council reserves, National Park, private land, etc.) on a voluntary basis (voluntary here means the individual members aren't paid, but the group is paid \$10 per volunteer-day. This money will go to tools, gloves, nursery gear, advertising, administration costs, and education programs.) The group is also in the throes of setting up a native plant nursery growing only local species. (Donations of nursery gear most welcome). The plants grown will be used in the regeneration work, and also made available to the public, BMCC, and other organisations.

So, come along and join! The group needs as many willing workers as possible, and welcomes ideas and suggestions.

Membership fees are \$10 per year, \$3 concessions, \$15 family. By joining 'Friends' you are joining ATCV, as the group has become a branch for insurance purposes. Because of this, only paid members may participate in tasks, though anyone is welcome at meetings. If you are already a member of ATCV, please contact the Friends so your name can be added to the list of local volunteers.

COMING EVENTS:

Thursday, June 19 - Darwins walk, meet cnr. Great Western Highway and Falls Road, Wentworth Falls - 10am. Also meeting at 10 Wascoe St., Leura, 7.30pm.

Saturday, June 21 - Minni-Ha-Ha Falls, 10am

Sunday, June 22 - Knapsack Gully, 10am

Thursday, June 26 - Minni-Ha-Ha Falls, 10am

Saturday, June 28 - Knapsack Gully, 10am

Sunday, June 29 - Darwins Walk, 10am

There is no compulsion to stay all day on the tasks - whatever time you can spare. Please wear long pants, long sleeves, covered shoes, and if you have them, bring gloves and hand tools (Secateurs, knife, etc.)

Transport can probably be arranged. Any inquiries ph. 841408 (Melinda & Alanna), 841043 (Sue), 824625 (Tiiu), or write to 10 Wascoe St., Leura, 2782. Happy days,

Sue Gardner.

Society News

I am sure all members would like to welcome Reg Toseland as the incoming President. The outgoing President, Mick Dark, had held the office for over three years—many thanks Mick. The Blue Mountains Environment Council held a public forum on sewerage in the Blue Mountains at Springwood in March. The M.W.S&D.B. presented their progress so far, on the plan for the Blue Mountains - the complete plan was due for release in May for public comment. We hope sufficient pressure can be brought to bear on governments to ensure that the issue is a national one and not just local. Mick Dark is the Society representative at the new three monthly meetings with our local member of State Parliament, Bob Debus, together with representative from the Lower B.M. Cons. Soc., to discuss local conservation issues. The Society welcomes the new environmental management plan for Wentworth Falls drawn up by the B.M. City Council. The Land Use Committee has prepared a detailed submission on the Plan with some minor points of clarification and objection. The Land Use Committee is continuing its investigation of the "hazard reduction" plan drawn up by the Fire Control Officer at the B.M. City Council.

RECENT BOOKS ACQUIRED BY THE LIBRARY

'Complete Book of Australian Mammals'

This book has been compiled by The Australian Museum from its National Photographic Index of Australian Wildlife. It is a magnificent full colour photographic record of Australia's mammals with text excellently edited by Ronald Strachan. The book surveys the rich and varied world of Australia's mammals from the well-known platypus, koala and kangaroo species to the little-known pygmy-possums, bats and carnivorous marsupials, the seals and sea-lions and even the introduced mammals such as camels, rabbits and deer.

The text is written by over a hundred authors, all acknowledged experts who have worked in the field with the species they describe. Ronald Strachan has shaped these accounts into a cohesive whole without ever losing the freshness of first-hand reports of encounters with animals.

'Tracks & Traces of Australian Animals'

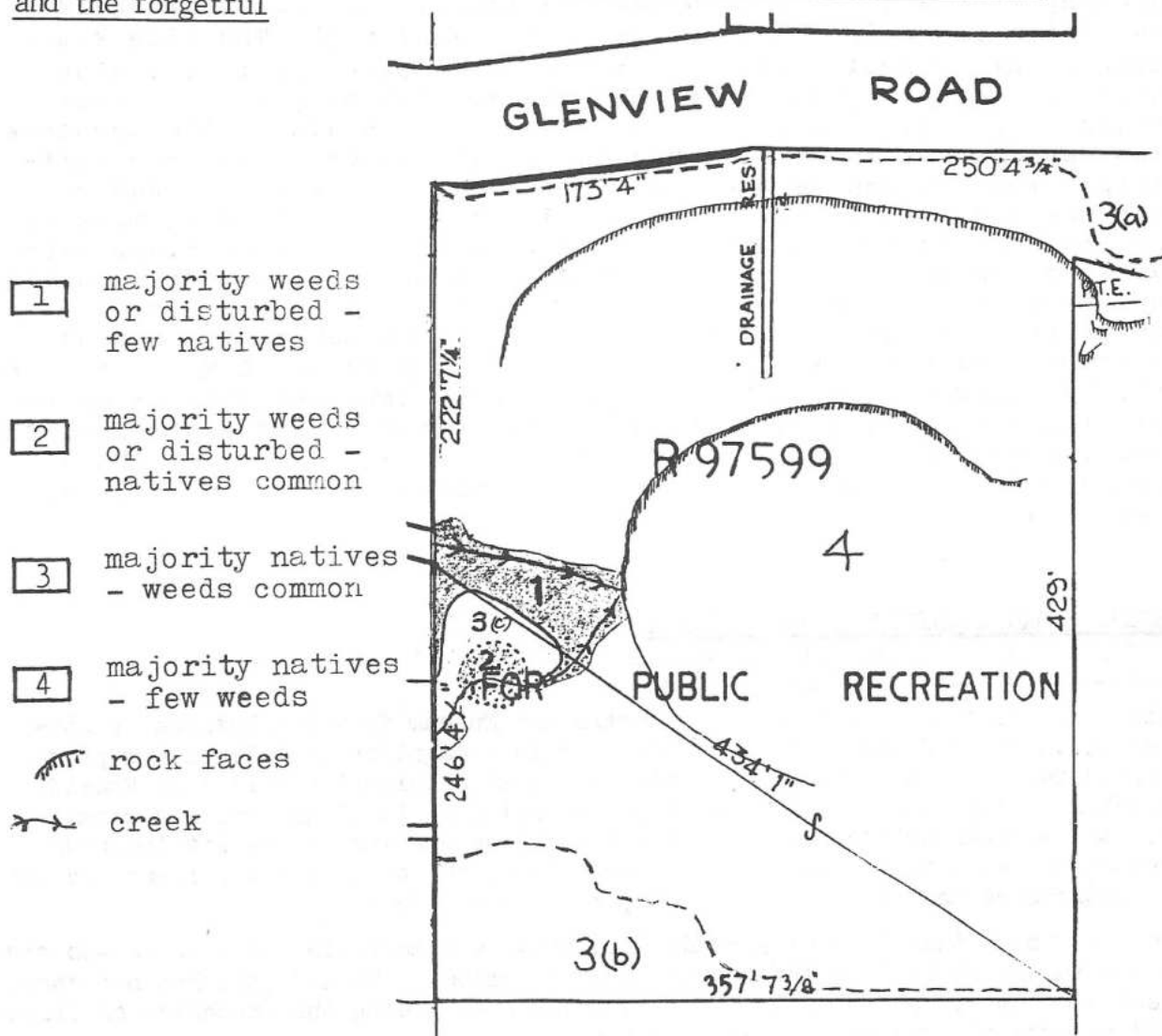
Everyone interested in Australian wildlife will welcome this essential and practical work, which enables quick identification of animal presence in many parts of the environment. For the first time, it presents an invaluable cross-section of the tracks and traces of a wide-range of Australian mammals and reptiles.

The practical and easily followed data guides the reader on animal identification by a study of tracks, droppings, skeletal remains, diggings and storage techniques. The text is amplified by a superb collection of 400 detailed photographs of the tracks and traces of Australian native animals, plus a number of diagrams.

A fascinating section of the book describes and illustrates the ways in which Aborigines simulate animal tracks with finger markings in sand or soil.

BUSH REGENERATION IN 'LEN'S' RESERVE - AND ELSEWHERE

Description and history of the Reserve for the benefit of new members and the forgetful



This environmentally sensitive area of over one hectare has a 145 metre frontage onto Glenview Road, Wentworth Falls. Within it, two water-courses converge to feed Water Nymphs Dell's picturesque waterfall about 60 metres downstream. Its swampland and wet sclerophyll vegetation shielded by dry sclerophyll vegetation help to protect and moisten the Dell's rainforest.

In 1982, Len Symes generously offered to donate for Reserve his part of the land (below the diagonal line on the plan) to the Land Preservation Fund Committee on the condition that they could persuade the Crown Lands Department to donate their land (above the diagonal line) also. The Society swung into action with submissions which secured the co-operation of the Lands Department, Blue Mountains City Council and the State Member.

The area was gazetted as Reserve 97599 in November 1984.

Digression - a Damaged Swamp

Hopefully every member knows why swamps are of special importance to the Blue Mountains. To those of us who have visited the Reserve it has really hit home.

Last year a block near the Reserve was cleared and trenches dug for footings. It turned into a quagmire and the project was abandoned. Since then the sides of the trenches have fallen in and blackberry and other weeds are taking over - and in the Reserve parts of 2, 3(c) and 1 on the above plan are now permanently a few centimetres underwater or very soggy.

It is a sorry state of affairs on the Blue Mountains that no body is responsible for warning an intending home builder who chooses swampy land of the considerable extra expense he will incur; of the difficulties he will face or of the environmental damage he will cause. Unfortunately, up here it is not always obvious to the average land buyer that land is swampy until it is cleared.

Bush Regeneration Plan

You will notice on the plan of the Reserve that most of the land is covered with natural vegetation. However, unhappily there are some sizeable weed infested areas. A few years ago, some members set to in an endeavour to control the spread. Last year Alan Goodwin (graduate of Mitchell College Environmental Control course and the National Trust Bush Regeneration School) drew up the plan with accompanying guidelines. Briefly they are as follows:

Work, with minimal soil disturbance, from the least weed infested area to the most densely infested. Allow native plant regeneration to dictate the rate of weed removal.

Start in area 4 by getting rid of weeds scattered through otherwise clean bush. If this is carried out this area will, with minimal effort, be safe from degeneration.

Then proceed to areas marked 3(a) and 3(b). Start by removing troublesome weeds, i.e. blackberry, honeysuckle, privet at the edge of good bush and in 3(c) choose patches of weeds from the best natural areas and work outwards to the canopy of pussy willows which should eventually be withdrawn.

In area 2 where there is little ground cover but some small clumps of fishbone water fern, remove weeds from these clumps. If disturbance is minimised these clumps should come together and form a good native cover.

Lastly work in area 1, which is too large, wet and infested to do quickly. Start by picking points along the boundary where natives are strong and move inwards only a couple of feet in wedges. When natives become established work in the sections between the wedges.

The Need for Bush Regeneration throughout the Blue Mountains

Weeds are spreading into the bushland at an alarming rate damaging the natural environment and reducing its aesthetic appeal.

Here are some ways in which members may be able to help in preventing their spread:

- a) Learn bush regeneration techniques by doing the Bradley Method of Bush Regeneration course conducted in Sydney by the National Trust. It runs for 9 Saturdays and costs approximately \$100.
- b) Buy the latest edition "Bradley Method of Bush Regeneration" published by the National Trust and follow its instructions carefully.

A caution: The aim is to provide conditions which favour the growth of natives and disadvantage exotics. Strangely, this is hard for the conventional gardener to keep in mind. So much so that the National Trust does not encourage people without training to work in the bush.

- c) Do not grow invasive exotic species in your garden. Plants such as honeysuckle, broom, ivy, privet, periwinkle, Kikuyu grass, montbretia and coreopsis are all likely to spread into the bush. And of course, don't throw your garden rubbish into the bush.
- d) Join a bush regeneration group.
 - Why not start by working with other members near the Hut where you can ease into the job with some ordinary garden weeding first. Every second and fourth Tuesday of the month.
 - Or help to carry out Alan Goodwin's plan in the new Reserve. This is a challenge not for the faint hearted. 'Phone 57 1573.
 - Or join the newly formed umbrella group "Friends of the Blue Mountains", (Branch of A.T.C.V.) 'Phone 84 1408.

Progress Report - Purchase of land for reserve in Water Nymph's Dell catchment. We are still awaiting formal acceptance of our offer. A legal complication has arisen between Blue Mountains City Council and the owner. This should not affect the purchase but will slow it down.

* * * * *

Rachel Makinson has lent a book on Care and Cure of Australian Trees, or some such title, to somebody, and cannot remember to whom. Now she needs it. Will the person who has it please either return it or ring Rachel on 87 1302 (or, if she is in Sydney, (02) 86 3178)

LAND PRESERVATION FUND

The Society has a Land Preservation Fund which was set up to give lovers of the bush an opportunity to help to preserve some environmentally important land in the Blue Mountains by its purchase and dedication as a reserve.

Tax Deductible Donations (Minimum \$20.00)

The forms below show you how to make a tax deductible donation to the Australian Conservation Foundation, advising ACF of your preference that the funds be used for the Land Preservation Fund of the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society.

The Director
Australian Conservation Foundation,
672B Glenferrie Rd.,
HAWTHORN VIC 3122

Dear Sir,

I attach a donation to the Australian Conservation Foundation. I prefer that this donation be spent for the purposes of the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society Land Preservation Fund. I understand that this donation is tax deductible and therefore look forward to your receipt.

Name (block letters)

Address

.....

Amount Signed Date

The Treasurer,
Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society,
P.O. Box 29,
WENTWORTH FALLS 2782

Dear Sir,

I have forwarded today to the Australian Conservation Foundation a donation expressing a preference that it be spent for the purpose of the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society Land Preservation Fund.

Name

Address.....

.....

Amount Signed Date.....

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Objects of the Society as set out in the Constitution are:

- (a) To disseminate and foster an understanding of the ideals of Conservation among members of the Society and the public generally, particularly in relation to the unique resources of the Blue Mountains.
- (b) To conduct meetings, excursions and research, and such other activities as may be determined by the Society in relation to Wildlife Conservation, and especially through the Conservation Hut at the Valley of the Waters, Wentworth Falls, to provide information on Conservation matters.
- (c) To maintain friendly relations with other Conservation Societies especially local bodies.

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY
P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls.

MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM*

The Membership Secretary:

I enclose a cheque or postal note for for membership or renewal of my membership.

Name

Address

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*strike out which does not apply.



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This version of the Newsletter was re-typed from the original by Phoebe Coster in May 2023 to enable search engines to 'see' the text. Minor changes have been made to correct typographical errors and to add clarity.

June 1986
No. 64

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER.

Registered by Australia Post – Publication No. NBHO 925

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Incorporated in New South Wales. Registered Office: The Conservation Hut, Valley of Waters Reserve, Valley Road Wentworth Falls 2782.

Address for Correspondence: P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Single Pension & Juniors \$2.00 per year; Married Pensioners \$3.00; Single Membership \$5.00; Family Membership \$8.00. Those joining after June 30th pay half subscription to end of year.

MEETINGS: Held on last Friday in the month, January to December inclusive at the Conservation Hut, Valley of Waters Reserve, Valley Road Wentworth Falls at 7.30 p.m.

For speakers at coming meetings, please see Public Notices in the Gazette.

COMMITTEE FOR 1985

President.....	Reg Toseland	84.4682
Vice-Presidents.....	Michael Dark	58.7061
	Eric Blick	88.1051
Secretary.....	David Horton James	57.3270
Treasurer.....	Joy Anderson	57.1602
Membership Officer.....	Joy Anderson	57.1602
Newsletter Editor.....	Ewart Collings	57.2131
Walks Convener.....	Olive and John Noble	87.8342
Hut Convener.....	Lois Horton-James	57.3270
Education Officer	Dorothy Davis	57.1258
Librarian.....	Betty Collings	57.2131
Hut Duty Organiser.....	Beverly Thompson	57.2076
Land Preservation Officer...	Winsome Gregory	57.1573

PATRON: Allen Strom, A.M.

NEWSLETTER: Four issues a year – March, June, September, December. Deadline for copy 20th of month previous. Advertising space available – contact Publicity/Advertising Officer.

THE HUT: The Society maintains a small museum and information centre at the Conservation Hut. It is manned on weekends and holidays by voluntary helpers.

LIBRARY: Facilities for borrowing and returning books at Monthly Meetings. A library list is available on request.

PUBLICATIONS: A range of specialist booklets, posters, maps, postcards etc may be purchased at the Hut.

SALE OF NATIVE PLANTS: Opportunities to purchase native plants grown by Members are organised from time to time during the year. These sales are held at the Hut, proceeds to the Land Preservation Fund.

WALKS: Walks are organised on the first Sunday and second Thursday of the month, conducted by experienced leaders.

LAND PRESERVATION: The Society has a Land Preservation Fund which was set up to give lovers of the bush an opportunity to preserve environmentally important land in the Blue Mountains by purchase and dedication as a reserve.

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COMING TALKS

June – Beverley Fiedler Nature Slides

July – Wyn Jones Wombat Management

August – Peter Smith Bushfires and Birds at Bega

COMING WALKS

July, Sunday 6th – Horse Track – Rodriguez Pass

Walk down Horse Track to creek, up Rodriguez Pass, see rain forest and water falls. Plenty of steps to climb – medium hard walk. Meet at Evans Lookout at 9.30 am. Approx. 6 hours walk. The climb will be taken gently. Leader John Noble. 87-8342

July, Thursday 17th – Walls Ledge – Centennial Glen

Plenty of low bush, magnificent views over Kanimbla Valley. Easy Track rough in places. Meet at Commuter Car Park, Blackheath (over level crossing and turn right) at 10.00 am. Approx. 4 hours walk. Leader Clive Noble. 87-8342

August, Sunday 3rd – Bruce's Walk. Details to be announced later.

August, Thursday 21st – The Duck Hole

Wildflower walk, fresh water; could boil the billy and have a barbeque if we wished. Meet at Ampol Service Station, Glenbrook at 10.00 am. Leader Jill Dark. 58-7061

September, Sunday 7th – Asgaard Swamp – Abandoned Mines

Walk along fire trail, see abandoned coal mine, low scrub. Easy. Meet at Mt Victoria station at 10.00am. Leader Rachel Makinson. 87-1302

September, Thursday 18th – Berghoffers Pass (Mt York Area).

A touch of history and a delightful walk in the Springtime. Easy. Fantastic views over Hartley Valley. Meet at Mt Victoria Station at 10.00 am. Leader Eric Blick. 88-1051

REPORT ON WALK – BORONIA POINT, COX'S CAVE, FAIRY BOWER – 20TH MARCH 1986

The morning was clear and colourful with a promise of heat. Swifts sliced the air with their sickle wings while twenty of us met at Mt Victoria station. We set off from Mt Piddington along the Horne's Point Road and took a somewhat concealed track on the left that leads to Boronia Point. The heath at first is dominated by *Banksia ericifolia*, their spikes not yet aflame. From the point we looked into the sleepy Kanimbla Valley and across at the time-eroded rocks and crannies to the beginnings of Mill Creek. We had to re-trace our steps to take the track down from Piddington to Cox's Cave.

A Golden Whistler welcomed us with his song, but alas no lyrebirds which at times frequent the area. We were lucky to have identified for us a not so common *Banksia paludosa* as well as many other plants. We passed by a mini forest of young Blue Mountains Ash, their place, thin trunks stretching and competing for the sun, on through a tunnel of black wattle, down and around rocks and water coursed to where the gully opens with a cathedral-like effect below Cox's Cave. The vertical ladder, the rock overhang, the sand slippery half buried steps up to the cave deterred no one. We all stood below the high double domed cave fascinated, but the vibrations of wonder from our geologist could almost be heard. He was baffled as to how it was formed. Since then he has been working on a theory which he will share with us some day.

We lunched in the cool, watery shade of Fairy Bower before climbing another track back to the top. The walk was a first for several but I'm sure they will be back for more in the area.

WALK – ROBERT'S PASS LADDER, INSPIRATION POINT, LILLIAN'S BRIDGE –
THURSDAY 17TH APRIL 1986

We started with 21 friends, but the rain beat us, and the finishing party was down to 9.

From Leura Golf Club, we walked to the Resort Site, and along the public access track to Inspiration Point in fine weather.

Our trip to the ladder at Robert's Pass was slightly overgrown, with ferns, but the actual access ladder was greatly admired and very much appreciated by all who ventured on to it. For this grand piece of voluntary work, we sincerely thank Bruce Forbes and Jim Smith; plus their friends who assisted, and for those who were at the 'opening', when David Lawton cut the ribbon.

On our return to Inspiration Point for lunch – we did get wet...and those who arrived last had no chance to shelter – all the under-ledges were full!! This is where some of us parted, but the rest took a chance, and we made it to Lilian's bridge in fine weather – rewarded by viewing lots of Flame Robins across the Golf Course.

We even made our return in dry weather, and were almost back to civilisation and the tarred roads, when the heavens opened. Enough said. Thank you to those who gave donations towards the cost of the ladder. See you next time.

REPORT ON VERA FALLS WALK – 6TH APRIL 1986

A small but manageable group of ten set off from the Hut for the Sunday bushwalk in April, to Vera Falls. We were well prepared for leeches, having sprayed our feet and ankles with aerogard and I had a large container of salt. However they must have been so well fed after the February walk that I only sighted one as we crossed the creek well down in the valley. At a couple of points we lost the track where it had been washed away, but we soon managed to pick it up again. It took us two hours to reach Vera Falls where we had lunch. We had to speak loudly against the noise of the Falls. After lunch we walked on to the junction with Jamieson Creek. It was sad to see that campers in this spot had left so much rubbish, and the area was also heavily infested with weed. The slower members of the party left earlier. It took us again two hours to go back up and for slower walkers probably two and three quarter hours. Practically no bird life was seen, except for a few Thornbills, and the only plants in bloom were in the dry sclerophyll area, where there were some Leptospermums unseasonably flowering, probably because of the mild autumn weather.

A LYRE BIRD CONFRONTATION

On a recent trip to the Snowy Mountains, rounding a corner on the very steep road above Tumut 2 Power Station, I disturbed a confrontation between two male lyre birds.

They faced each other about a metre apart, their long tails upright an arresting sight. Their tails were not expanded and spread over their heads as in the courtship display, but narrow, closed and straight upright, the magnificent lyre-shaped outside feathers outlining striking replicas of that instrument.

As June is the beginning of the lyre bird breeding season, I assume this was a male territorial challenge, leading up to physical combat if one bird did not give way.

Male lyre birds take up territories in which they build dancing mounds to which they attract females for mating with their song and dance act. Like male bower birds they take no part in nest building or rearing the chicks.

From now on, if you creep very, very cautiously through the bush towards a singing male lyre bird, you might be fortunate enough to witness his remarkable courtship dance.

Spreading his tail feathers over his head, exposing their white undersides, he jumps up and down, making them shimmer like a cascading fountain. But be very cautious – he's extremely alert.

Graham Alcorn

DO BIRDS SHARE BREEDING AREAS?

In the Autumn it is common to see foraging mixed flocks of small birds. They have left their nesting territories and apparently gain some mutual benefit from foraging together.

But last Spring I formed the opinion that there are areas that they like to share for breeding, also. Down the road from my place at Medlow Bath is a flat, sedgy area of fairly open dry eucalypt forest. The predominate undergrowth is teatree.

Though not more than a hectare, eight species nested here, in a rough semi-circle around the swampy flat. I paced out the distances between the nests, as follows: Red Browed Finch, 29 paces; Grey Fantail to Brown Thornbill, 28 paces; Brown Thornbill to Flame Robin, 35 paces; Flame Robin to Varied Sitella, 17 paces; Varied Sitella to Variegated Wren, 20 paces (this at an angle into swamp); Sitella to Yellow Faced honey Eater, 24 paces; Yellow Faced honey Eater to Grey Thrush, 18 paces.

Interesting, isn't it? Only one of the nests was molested by predators. The young of the Grey Fantail were taken. This is a very high success rate. In my past nest recordings, it is usually about 50% for small birds.

The Grey Thrush is a threat, and I suspect the predator of the Fantails. But all the other young birds had either left the nests or were well advanced by the time the young thrushes hatched.

This area adjoins a thickly timbered gully where a number of other species breed, but along the ridges you can go a long way in either direction without finding nests.

Graham Alcorn

MAY HOLIDAYS COLOUR-IN

There was an enthusiastic response to the Education Committee's second art competition during the May school holidays.

This was colouring in two line drawings of birds, animals, etc, which might have been 'seen in the bush today'. Great originality was shown in the choice of colours used not strictly as in nature, but we were pleased that reference was made from time to time to the posters on the walls showing the native flora and fauna.

The children loved it and parents thought it was a good refuge when the weather was wet.

The winners in the May Holiday 1986 Art Competition were -

Sub-Junior	Brent Della Vale – Wentworth Falls Primary School
Junior	Catherine Farwood – Sylvania Heights Infants School
Intermediate	Kamilla Elliot – Wentworth Falls Primary School

UNCONFORMITY AT KANANGRA

In mid April I went to Kanangra Walls with a group of friends hoping to see Halley's Comet through a clear atmosphere – I have recorded that excursion in another journal under the heading "The View from Kanangra shouldn't be mist".

We camped at Boyd Crossing and next morning let us view the landscape from under light cloud cover. We drove to the end of the road and walked along a track through preservational works of the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Kanangra is justly famous for its glorious panoramic views but is also of geological interest for the striking angular unconformity which is part of the Walls. In sketches hereunder I have endeavoured to explain the term unconformity.

SKETCH NOT REPRODUCED.

An unconformity occurs where sediments are deposited on another rock surface after a time gap. An angular unconformity occurs as at Kanangra where the underlying beds dip at a different angle to the younger upper beds.

Kanangra Walls is at one of the extremities of the Sydney Basin in which most of us live. The Snapper Point Formation (formerly known in our area as Megalong Conglomerate) is exposed at a height of about 1000 metres as the foot track descends to Murdering Gully. The same formation is exposed at about 700 metres near Tallong and at sea level at Snapper Point near Durras at the southern extremity of the Basin.

Lambie Group rocks occur as basement rocks of the Sydney Basin. They are generally of quartzite i.e. sandstone hardened by geological processes. They occur at some 1200 metres at Mt Lambie, at about 900 metres at Kanangra and also low in the Jamison Valley between the Hut and Korowal. The rocks have been extensively weathered and have subsided to receive Sydney Basin sediments.

Of the boundaries shown in the lower sketch, as deposition of Berry Siltstone followed that of Snapper Point Formation without a time break this is a comfortable boundary. The Snapper Point Formation – Lambie Group boundary has an evident time lapse and is an unconformity, evident because, as the sketch indicates, the Lambian beds, after being laid down in horizontal or near horizontal form, have been tilted and the upturned edges weathered off to form a new surface before the Snapper Point Formation deposition commenced. The time gap could have been from the end of Lambian deposition to the commencement of Snapper Point deposition, say something in excess of one hundred million years.

The foot track across the Snapper Point Formation also provides geological interest. At first sight the formation could be taken for a conglomerate but a conglomerate infers deposition by water and usually involves two items.

- (i) the constituent rocks are rounded or at least sub-rounded to indicate transport by a stream or working (over) by sea.
- (ii) the constituent rocks are sorted during deposition i.e. the heavier, larger rocks sink to the bottom (of the strata), then medium size rocks in the middle layers, with smaller on top. These various grades of rocks lie in a matrix of finer grains, say sand.

But, the dramatic rock formation across which we walked appeared neither water worn, nor sorted. Boulders, i.e. rocks with a dimension in excess of 256mm occurred unsorted throughout the bed, associated with cobbles and pebbles, and in many cases rocks showed sharp edges i.e. no sign of edge rounding by water transport.

Edgeworth David, one of our geological pioneers, suggested that this bed could be of glacial origin, i.e. the constituent rocks were collected and moved by a glacier and when the glacier melted, dropped without sorting to make such a bed as we traversed. This could have been called a boulder bed.

Some later geologists regard the bed as being a sedimentary megabreccia within the Snapper point Formation caused by Permian seas having eroded high resistant headlands which produced large quantities of angular, unsorted debris.

R.T.C.

BARGAINS, FOLKS SINGERS, DENIS KEVANS, SOUP AND BREAD ROLLS

Here's a chance to re-cycle your old friends for Conservation. Maybe its a friendly chair or table, book or wheelbarrow or a cherished pot of jam or cake that you would like to see have a new home. Bring your donations to the Hut on Friday 25th July (meeting night) or Saturday 26th July when we will have a sale of all these goodies to raise funds for the Land Preservation Fund.

To ease the pain of parting with friends or money, we'll have soup, Bread Rolls and Folk Singers on Saturday. Start saving now and watch the local press for further details.

VARIATIONS ON A THEME

As your Society continues to grace me with the title of "Patron" and send me copies of your excellent little journal, I have felt it essential to make a contribution from time to time, without being just a name (and a not so pretty face).

I was particularly motivated by recently calling at the "Hut", unfortunately on a day when it was unmanned (or unpersoned?). The occasion is unlikely to be repeated often, as I am not given these days to long jaunts away from the Central Coast. The visit was valuable however, as it reminded me of the day of the opening of the Hut by the then Minister for Conservation, to which I was invited. I was at that time, Chief Guardian of Fauna for the State of New South Wales, and most appreciative of the initiative of the Katoomba and District Wildlife Conservation Society (I hope my memory serves me well), in undertaking "conservation education".... in other words, trapping all those happy-go-lucky tourists who ventured along the walking tracks around the Valley of the

Waters...tracks incidentally, that my father used to carry me on his shoulders, more than sixty five years ago.

The trouble with education of course, is that it is slow and problematical...it may change the world in the end, or it may produce half converted disciples, who practice conservations on Sundays and tear the hell out of the environment for the rest of the week. Often the Under Secretary of the Chief Secretary's Department (a Department now well departed) would say to me as head of the Wildlife Service..."if we could use the propaganda procedures of the famous Goebbels, maybe we would see great changes in our time". "In our time" is the critical phrase. We all need great encouragement if we are able to go on and on with our efforts against what amounts to in the ultimate, the selfish and shortsighted avarice of our own countrymen, let alone others who might have their eyes on the resources of a land still with much that remains pristine, or nearly so. We all need to see some results from our efforts, since unlike the developer and investor, the achievements of the conservationist rests with management of the resources rather than with their exploitation.

It is fifty years since I first began to devise ways and means of spelling out the thinking of a conservationist. During that time I have seen some shattering changes in the environment, but at the same time, some splendid achievements. This is not the place and time to list each, and of course, I cannot be sure that the achievements will be self-perpetuating. Humans are responsible for determining what will happen in the future .. or at least until some unknown force destroys the processes "that makes our world go round". Personally, I believe that we are responsible for what happens to this "living place and living space", irrespective of who causes good or evil. Too many of us will not face the job of persistence on behalf of the life-style of balanced resource use ... resource use on a sustained yield basis; nor face up to what this demands in population pressures, curbs on luxuries, structuring of society into the 'have' and the 'have-nots'.

What is needed most is a change in human behaviour. We need a primitive understanding of association with the earth and living things. Through the centuries we have been taught by education of a formal nature, and by precept from our mother's lap, that it is our function to control the earth and the "fowl of air". That talk has been music to our ears .. it has been what we wanted to hear. Conservation serves to deny that supremacy and all good conservationists must face that devastating fact. If we learn to believe that life is a battle with the natural systems, we will be one sort of person ... if we learn to co-ordinate with nature, we must be another person, indeed.

Environmental educators, I have concluded, must be evangelists. The great difference with the usual evangelists, is that environmental educators cannot promise a better world to come ... they believe if this world is wrecked, then our children's children will inherit a living hell.

ALLEN A. STROM

FRIENDS OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS – A Branch of ATCV

"Feeling Weedy?" - the catch-cry of the Hut Weeders (that gallant brigade of members who aim to keep the area surrounding the Hut free of weeds) has now been taken up anew!

The 'Friends' is a community-based regeneration group which aims to work in areas of degraded bush (council reserves, National Park, private land, etc.) on a voluntary basis (voluntary here means the individual members aren't paid, but the group is paid \$10 per volunteer-day. This money will go to tools, gloves, nursery gear, advertising, administration costs, and education programs.) The group is also in the throes of setting up a native plant nursery growing only local species. (Donations of nursery gear most welcome). The plants grown will be used in the regeneration work, and also made available to the public, BMCC, and other organisations.

So, come along and join! The group needs as many willing workers as possible, and welcomes ideas and suggestions.

Membership fees are \$10 per year, \$3 concessions, \$15 family. By joining "Friends" you are joining ATCV, as the group has become a branch for insurance purposes. Because of this, only paid members may participate in tasks, though anyone is welcome at meetings. If you are already a member of ATCV, please contact the Friends so your name can be added to the list of local volunteers.

COMING EVENTS:

Thursday, June 19 – Darwin's walk, meet cnr, Great Western Highway and Falls Road, Wentworth Falls – 10 am. Also meeting at 10 Wascoe St Leura, 7.30 pm.

Saturday, June 21 – Minni-Ha-Ha Falls, 10 am.

Sunday, June 22 – Knapsack Gully, 10 am.

Thursday, June 26 – Minni-Ha-Ha Falls, 10 am.

Saturday, June 28 – Knapsack Gully, 10 am.

Sunday, June 29 – Darwins Walk, 10 am.

There is no compulsion to stay all day on the tasks – whatever time you can spare. Please wear long pants, long sleeves, covered shoes, and if you have them, bring gloves and hand tools (Secateurs, knife, etc.)

Transport can probably be arranged. Any inquiries ph. 841408 (Melinda & Alanna), 841043 (Sue), 824625 (Tiiu), or write to 10 Wascoe St Leura, 2782. Happy days.

Sue Gardner.

Society News

I am sure all members would like to welcome Reg Toseland as the incoming President. The outgoing President, Mick Dark, had held the office for over three years – many thanks Mick. The Blue Mountains Environment Council held a public forum on sewerage in the Blue Mountains at Springwood in March. The M.W.S&D.B. (Metropolitan Water Sewerage and Drainage Board) presented their progress so far, on the plan for the Blue Mountains – the complete plan was due for release in May for public comment. We hope sufficient pressure can be brought to bear on governments to ensure that the issue is a national one and not just local. Mick Dark is the Society representative at the new three monthly meetings with our local member of State Parliament, Bob Debus, together with representative from the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society, to discuss local conservation issues. The Society welcomes the new environmental management plan for Wentworth Falls drawn up by the Blue Mountains City Council.

The Land Use Committee has prepared a detailed submission on the Plan with some minor points of clarification and objection. The Land use Committee is continuing its investigation of the “hazard reduction” plan drawn up by the Fire Control Officer at the Blue Mountains City Council.

RECENT BOOKS ACQUIRED BY THE LIBRARY

‘Complete Book of Australian Mammals’

This book has been compiled by The Australian Museum from its National Photographic Index of Australian Wildlife. It is a magnificent full colour photographic record of Australia’s mammals with text excellently edited by Ronald Strachan. The book surveys the rich and varied world of Australia’s mammals from the well-known platypus, koala and kangaroo species to the little known pygmy-possums, bats and carnivorous marsupials, the seals and sea lions and the introduced mammals such as camels, rabbits and deer.

The text is written by over a hundred authors, all acknowledged experts who have worked in the field with the species they describe. Ronald Strachan has shaped these accounts into a cohesive whole without ever losing the freshness of first hand reports of encounters with animals.

‘Tracks & Traces of Australian Animals’

Everyone interested in Australian wildlife will welcome this essential and practical work, which enables quick identification of animal presence in many parts of the environment. For the first time, it presents an invaluable cross-section of the tracks and traces of a wide-range of Australian mammals and reptiles.

The practical and easily followed data guides the reader on animal identification by a study of tracks, droppings, skeletal remains, diggings and storage techniques. The text is amplified by a superb collection of 400 detailed photographs of the tracks and traces of Australian native animals, plus a number of diagrams.

A fascinating section of the book describes and illustrates the ways in which Aborigines simulate animal tracks with finger markings in sand or soil.

BUSH REGENERATION IN ‘LEN’S” RESERVE – AND ELSEWHERE

Description and history of the Reserve for the benefit of new members and the forgetful

PICTURE NOT INSERTED

This environmentally sensitive area of over one hectare has a 145 metre frontage onto Glenview Road, Wentworth Falls. Within it, two water courses converge to feed Water Nymphs Dell’s picturesque waterfall about 60 metres downstream. Its swampland and wet sclerophyll vegetation shielded by dry sclerophyll vegetation help to protect and moisten the Dell’s rainforest.

In 1982, Len Symes generously offered to donate for Reserve his part of the land (below the diagonal line of the plan) to the Land Preservation Fund Committee on the condition that they could persuade the Crown Lands Department to donate their land (above the diagonal line) also. The Society swung into action with submissions which secured the co-operation of the Lands Department, Blue Mountains City Council and the State Member.

The area was gazetted as Reserve 97599 in November 1984.

Digression – a Damaged Swamp

Hopefully every member knows why swamps are of special importance to the Blue Mountains. To those of us who have visited the Reserve it has really hit home.

Last year a block near the Reserve was cleared and trenches dug for footings. It turned into a quagmire and the project was abandoned. Since then the sides of the trenches have fallen in and blackberry and other weeds are taking over – and in the Reserve parts of 2, 3(c) and 1 on the above plan are now permanently underwater or very soggy.

It is a sorry state of affairs on the Blue Mountains that no body is responsible for warning an intending home builder who chooses swampy land of the considerable extra expense he will incur; of the difficulties he will face or of the environmental damage he will cause. Unfortunately, up here it is not always obvious to the average land buyer that land is swampy until it is cleared.

Bush Regeneration Plan

You will notice on the plan of the Reserve that most of the land is covered with natural vegetation. However, unhappily there are some sizeable weed infested areas. A few years ago, some members set to in an endeavour to control the spread. Last year Alan Goodwin (graduate of Mitchell College Environmental Control course and the National Trust Bush Regeneration School) drew up the plan with accompanying guidelines. Briefly they are as follows:

- Work, with minimal soil disturbance, from the least infested area to the most densely infested. Allow native plant regeneration to dictate the rate of weed removal.
- Start in area 4 by getting rid of weeds scattered through otherwise clean bush. If this is carried out this area will, with minimal effort, be safe from degeneration.
- Then proceed to areas marked 3(a) and 3(b). Start by removing troublesome weeds, i.e. blackberry, honeysuckle, privet at the edge of good bush and in 3(c) choose patches of weeds from the best natural areas and work outwards to the canopy of pussy willows which should eventually be withdrawn.
- In area 2 where there is little ground cover but some small clumps of fishbone water fern, remove weeds from these clumps. If disturbance is minimised these clumps should come together and form a good native cover.

- Lastly work in area 1, which is too large, wet and infested to do quickly. Start by picking points along the boundary where natives are strong and move inwards only a couple of feet in wedges. When natives become established work in the sections between the wedges.

The Need for Bush Regeneration throughout the Blue Mountains

Weeds are spreading into the bushland at an alarming rate damaging the natural environment and reducing its aesthetic appeal.

Here are some ways in which members may be able to help in preventing their spread:

- a) Learn bush regeneration techniques by doing the Bradley Method of Bush Regeneration course conducted in Sydney by the National Trust. It runs for 9 Saturdays and costs approximately \$100.
- b) Buy the latest edition “Bradley Method of Bush Regeneration” published by the National Trust and follow its instructions carefully.

A caution: The aim is to provide conditions which favour the growth of natives and disadvantage exotics. Strangely, this is hard for the conventional gardener to keep in mind. So much so that the National Trust does not encourage people without training to work in the bush.

- c) Do not grow invasive species in your garden. Plants such as honeysuckle, broom, ivy, privet, periwinkle, Kikuyu grass, montbretia and coreopsis are all likely to spread into the bush. And of course, don't throw your garden rubbish into the bush.
- d) Join a bush regeneration group.
 - Why not start by working with other members near the Hut where you can ease into the job with some ordinary garden weeding first. Every second and fourth Tuesday of the month.
 - Or help to carry out Alan Goodwin's plan in the new Reserve. This is a challenge not for the faint hearted. Phone 57 1573.
 - Or join the newly formed umbrella group “Friends of the Blue Mountains”, (Branch of ATCV) Phone 84 1408.

Progress Report – Purchase of land for reserve in Water Nymph's Dell catchment. We are still awaiting formal acceptance of our offer. A legal complication has arisen between Blue Mountains City Council and the owner. This should not affect the purchase but will slow it down.

Rachel Makinson has lent a book on Care and Cure of Australian Trees, or some such title, to somebody, and cannot remember to whom. Now she needs it. Will the person who has it please either return it or ring Rachel on 87 1302 (or, if she is in Sydney, (02) 86 3178).